



Learning from our Children & Family Advice Service

Jennifer Cirone, Children & Families Support Advisor

Background and Context



- “Single homelessness” services
- 47% women, 38% men are parents
- Rebuilding Shattered Lives – women wanted
 - co-ordinated support during pregnancy
 - support reconnecting with children
 - help understanding care proceedings
 - opportunities to grieve lost children



Background and Context



- Having children is central to identity
- “Difficult to move on” without addressing unmet need
- Important motivators for recovery
- Needs identified:
 - Reconnection and contact
 - Support and understanding of systems
 - Understanding options and rights
 - Acceptance of past loss
 - Building parenting capacity

Our work



- Pilot Children & Family Advice Service since August 2014
- Funded through fundraising connected with Rebuilding Shattered Lives Campaign
 - Building organisational capacity
 - Specialist casework advice
 - Tailored parenting classes

Building organisational capacity



- Supporting workers to ask the question
- Supporting workers – knowledge and confidence
- Creating resources - e.g. factsheets and seasonal advice – Mother's Day, Christmas
- Identifying, documenting and disseminating good practice
- Underpinned by organisational policy and procedure and sound safeguarding

Specific casework advice



- Workers contact service for advice and are supported to work with clients to carry out actions, ongoing support from advisor
- No cost legal advice sources identified
- Many clients unaware of their rights
- Being listened to, non-judgmental approach
- Explaining and understanding is very important
- Reducing justice gap – McKenzie Friends

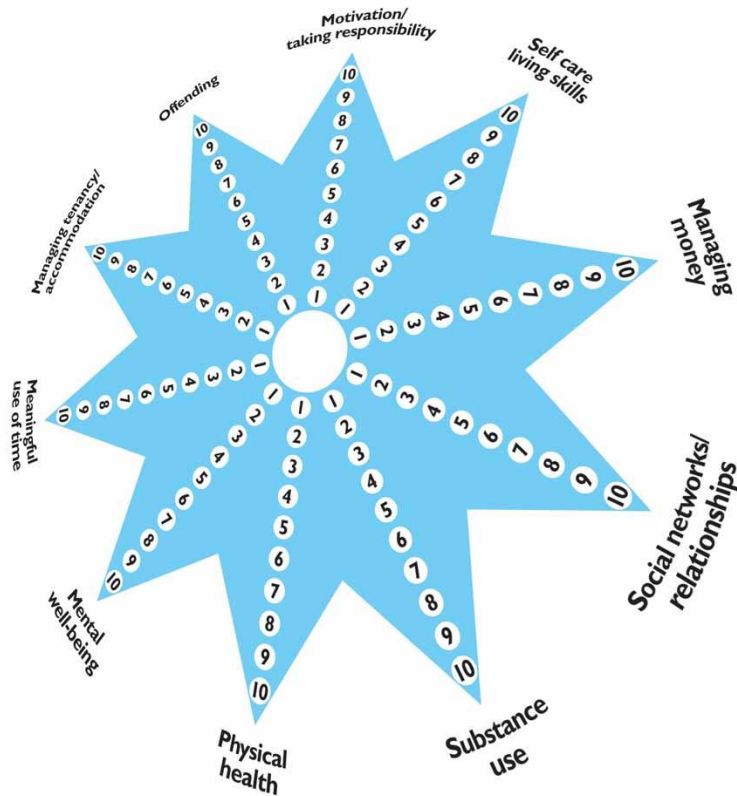
Outcomes have included.....



- Several clients supported to re-establish letterbox contact
- Parent supported to be assessed for permanency option
- Supporting client to identify and advocate for placement with Special Guardian cf. adoption
- Advocacy for several clients to move on from housing with children
- Prompt identification of safeguarding issues and action taken
- Birth parents joining Adoption Contact Register

What is the impact?

St Mungo's
Ending homelessness
Rebuilding lives



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Outcome	Engaged CFSA (n=15)	Non- Engaged CFSA (n=58)
	%	%
Managing Money	60%	43%
Managing Tenancy	73%	47%
Meaningful use of time	47%	38%
Mental well being	73%	50%
Motivation	67%	47%
Offending	67%	57%
Physical health	60%	45%
Self care	53%	55%
Social networks	53%	45%
Substance use	53%	47%

What is the impact?



- Clients with children engaging with service (usually casework) show improvements in all outcomes with the exception of self care in a short period
- Compares clients of similar support needs living in same space
- Biggest changes **mental wellbeing** (73% cf. 50%)
- 67% **motivation** cf. 47% non-engaged
- **80% engaged clients positive outcomes cf 54/% who did not**

Future plans



- Need to further embed needs around children and families in our work with clients
- Evaluate and develop evidence based model of support for dissemination across the sector
- Seeking continued funding to continue this work

Links



- <http://rebuildingshatteredlives.org/>
- http://www.mungos.org/homelessness/publications/latest_publications_and_research/2440_children-and-family-support-and-advice-service-recovery-results-2015